

Impact of peer coaching on self-efficacy and instructional skills in TEFL teacher education

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Abstract

The goal of the study was to test whether student teachers trained using a peer coaching training program after teaching practicum sessions in teaching of English as a foreign language would demonstrate greater improvement on measures of a number of identified instructional skills and self-efficacy than those just receiving traditional supervisor visits. Two groups of student teachers (32 in total) from English language teaching Department of European University of Lefke, North Cyprus doing their Teaching Practicum course (EDU 420) as part of a B.A. teacher education program were compared in regard to their (a) self-efficacy, and (b) development of (clarity) instructional skills. Results showed statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental condition on 7 variables measured. The findings also have implications for how peer coaching can be a vehicle to develop self-efficacy.

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1. Introduction

From the 1970s to the present there has been a marked shift in our understanding of what we mean by teacher preparation in teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL).

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In the earlier period, teacher training was dominant, but beginning in the 1990s teacher development assumed a central role. Teacher development serves a longer-term goal and seeks to facilitate growth of the teacher's general understanding of teaching and of himself or herself as a teacher. It often involves examining different dimensions of one's own practice as a basis for reflective review, and can hence be seen as "bottom-up" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Learning from examining one's own teaching, from carrying out classroom research, from creating teaching portfolios, from interacting with colleagues through critical friendships, mentoring and participating in teacher networks, are all regarded as ways in which teachers can acquire new skills and knowledge. This reflects the prevailing educational philosophy of constructivism which is currently popular in education including language teacher education: knowledge is actively constructed and not passively received (Jacobs and Farrell, 2001; Pickering, 2003).

By viewing teacher development as a coordinated effort and a lifelong process from the first days in a teacher education program and extending throughout one's career, we can look forward to more accountability with better instructional results, higher self-efficacy and better working conditions.

What is professional preparation in the field of TEFL? Pre-service TEFL programs offer student teachers tailored and highly specialized knowledge in language and linguistics, TEFL methodology and testing, practice teaching, and a variety of other areas depending on the program. Teachers are prepared with the knowledge base (Maclean, 1999; Freeman and Johnson, 1998).

In addition to knowledge, pre-service programs are expected to prepare teachers with a variety of techniques and strategies for acculturating into their profession. There may be more opportunities for student teachers in these programs through teacher practicum courses to build skills to lead or supervise teachers and other staff; to build a tailored, needs-based curriculum for a special program; or to create a reflective learning community.

Yet current teaching practicum courses actually tend to implement more structural, guided and traditional formats for this type of courses which involve faculty observation–supervision and feedback (Bean and Stevens, 2002; Farrell, 1998; Freeman and Johnson, 1998; Linn and Gorrell, 2001; Shrum and Glisan, 2000).

Considering recent developments based on reflective practices in the field, I argue that these courses could aim to create reflective learning communities where student teachers would also be trained as reflective practitioners through peer coaching, because it affords unique benefits that cannot be simply orchestrated in the other types of experiences.

A very useful area of teacher development is conducting classroom research with other teachers with the same interests in order to reflect on teaching practice. Some language education researchers imply that action research involves working together with at least one colleague and possibly with faculty teams (Carrier, 2003; Crookes, 2003; Ferguson and Donno, 2003; Jacobs and Farrell, 2001; Pickering, 2003). All participants will benefit from initiating dialogue with colleagues and using a model for how to communicate effectively when reflecting on improving teaching performance in a reflective learning community.

One strategy for teacher development particularly well suited to the formation of a reflective learning community is that of peer coaching, defined as the process of two teachers working together in and out of the classroom to plan instruction, develop support materials, and watch one another work with students. Peer coaching is non-evaluative, based on classroom observation followed by feedback, and intended to improve specific

instructional techniques (Skinner and Welch, 1996; Swafford, 1998; Valencia and Killion, 1998).

Peer coaching is also a process in which teams of pre-service teachers regularly observe each other to provide assistance, suggestions, and support (Chism, 1999; Joyce and Showers, 1980). Joyce and Showers (1980) also introduced peer coaching as a vehicle for experienced teachers to use the skills learned during in-service training in their classrooms. Further research indicated wide support for the implementation of peer coaching to provide transfer of training to classroom practice, promoting collegiality through peers' exchange of feedback, as well as the development of reflective teachers (Brown, 2001; Garmston, 1989).

The goal of this study is to test whether student teachers trained using a peer coaching training program after teaching practicum sessions in TEFL will demonstrate greater improvement on instructional skills and self-efficacy than those just receiving traditional supervisor visits. It also aims to document for practitioners on how peer coaching can be designed and implemented successfully in TEFL teacher training programs.

2. Background

There seems to be a precedent for evaluating teacher education programs with instruments that obtain data on various dimensions of the programs and elicit suggestions for program development. Although field experiences in teacher education have long been considered beneficial to the professional development of prospective teachers, there is a persistent concern that such experiences may not reach their full potential value. There has been little progress in TEFL with regard to peer coaching programs and their implications for language classrooms. The field of EFL teaching lacks in empirical research as to the effectiveness of peer coaching implementations.

Traditionally, the improvement of teaching practices has been left to individual teachers working in isolation, perhaps coming together for a workshop, seminar, or lecture-based training session, but the outcomes have not been as promising as hoped (Pierce and Hunsaker, 1996). New definitions of professional development, currently being advocated by state and national professional organizations (e.g., Arizona Education Association, 2003; National Staff Development Council, 2001), as well as governmental and funding agencies (e.g., US Department of Education, 2001), characterize professional development as a systemic, intentional process, involving multiple members of the educational community, with a clear focus on the improvement of student learning.

In order to reach this end, recent professional development efforts have moved away from an emphasis on skills training to the "establishment of new norms of collegiality, experimentation, and risk-taking by promoting open discussion of issues, shared understandings, and a common vocabulary" (Grant, 1996, p. 22). This form of development is based on the assumption that teachers are productive, responsible members of a professional community who facilitate their own renewal, as well as the renewal of their schools, through active participation in the community (Grant, 1996; Little, 1993).

Current recommendations for achieving high quality professional development for teachers include the creation of a professional learning community where each member of the educational community – student, teacher, parent, community, principal, and staff – is both teacher and learner. An effective way of creating a professional learning community particularly for teacher development is to create a process of peer coaching in a school (Valencia and Killion, 1998).

In this study, student teachers were exposed to a 15-h-training session on peer coaching including participation in a series of peer coaching cycles and sessions with the following objectives:

1. To introduce and apply skills of peer observation (listening, questioning, observing, collecting data, and providing objective and factual feedback).
2. To encourage increased use of research and best practice in applying new instructional strategies, curriculum materials, assessment strategies, and classroom organization patterns.
3. To identify necessary conditions, structures and supports for getting the most out of a peer coaching program (staff development, substitute coverage for classroom observation, confidentiality of observation records, voluntary participation, emphasis on reflection, instructional leadership, and classroom behavior).

The training program above was accompanied by a specific emphasis on teacher instructional skills (clarity skills) and self-efficacy in order to compare the effects of peer coaching with those of faculty (course conveyor) supervision. Metcalf (1989) suggested seven skills, generalizable across content areas that contribute to clarity of instruction: (a) informing students of lesson objectives, (b) repeating important points, (c) using examples, (d) repeating information students do not understand, (e) asking questions, (f) providing opportunities for student questions, and (g) furnishing practice opportunities. Several sources demonstrated that positive student outcomes have been linked to those variables (Hines et al., 1985; Metcalf, 1989).

For the purposes of this study, these seven instructional skills were considered essential for foreign language teaching because they enhanced student teachers' presentations of real life situation tasks, organization of communicative activities, and classroom management. They are also a cluster of teacher behaviors that result in students' gaining knowledge or understanding of a topic if they possess adequate interest, aptitude, opportunity, and time.

To measure self-efficacy, Bandura's General Self-Efficacy Scale (1995) was administered. The construct of self-efficacy, which was introduced by Bandura, represents one core aspect of his social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1997). While outcome expectancies refer to the perception of the possible consequences of one's action, self-efficacy expectancies refer to personal action control or agency. A person who believes in being able to cause an event can conduct a more active and self-determined life course. This "can do"-cognition mirrors a sense of control over one's environment. It reflects the belief of being able to control challenging environmental demands by means of taking adaptive action. It can be regarded as a self-confident view of one's capability to deal with certain life stressors.

The literature documents widely the pervasive influence of self-efficacy beliefs and corroborates social cognitive theory that places these beliefs at the roots of human agency (Bandura, 2001). Recently, considerable focus has been placed on some of the "human" variables in teaching, such as teacher motivation and self-efficacy beliefs (Borgogni, 2001; Goddard, 2001; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Self-efficacy, in particular, has produced a seemingly important variable that serves to contribute to overall teacher motivation.

Studies attempting to impact efficacy in pre-service teachers have also proven fruitful. As noted by Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), "the development of teacher efficacy beliefs among prospective teachers has generated a great deal of research interest because once

efficacy beliefs are established, they appear to be somewhat resistant to change” (p. 235). Presumably, this difference between pre-service and practicing teachers is due to the formative nature of a pre-service teacher’s beliefs about his or her teaching. A teacher-in-training may be more receptive to instructional feedback. Additionally, teaching observations and/or experiences may be more salient for someone yet to foreclose on a career identity.

For example, Volkman et al. (1992) studied the positive effects of field-based reflective practice on pre-service teacher efficacy. Other studies focusing on pre-service teachers have found that self-efficacy is often enhanced in the context of learning relationships in which pre-service teachers are able to avail themselves of feedback from experiences, colleagues, supervisors, and/or the general social environment (Clifford and Green, 1996; Watters and Ginns, 1995).

Studies in different countries (Campbell, 1996; Gorrell et al., 1998; Linn and Gorrell, 2001) have shown that pre-service teachers vary in the degree to which they believe themselves to be efficacious in their teaching. These studies suggested that the teacher efficacy concept is more differentiated in some countries, and is strongly influenced by unique features of the inherent cultures. For example, Linn and Gorrell’s (2001) study of Taiwanese pre-service teachers reported that efficacy beliefs are influenced by cultural and/or social backgrounds, as well as by the features of particular programs, and by the context of pre-service teachers’ studies.

To be able to achieve three aims, the study focused on (a) exploring the effectiveness of each supervision model on the development of clarity skills, (b) assessing the content of discussions in terms of self-efficacy in the post-conferences implemented in after teaching sessions, and (c) ascertaining levels of satisfaction with the field experience among student teachers in each group.

3. Hypothesis and research questions

Building on the premise outlined above, it was hypothesized that student teachers would increase demonstrations and effectiveness of instructional skills and develop self-efficacy through peer coaching and consistent feedback when compared to traditional supervised practicum teaching. Thus, the following research questions are posed, as the study inquires into the relationship of peer coaching to the pedagogical performance of student teachers and to student achievement:

1. To what extent can peer coaching develop self-efficacy of peer-coached student teachers?
2. Which supervision model is more effective in increasing demonstrations and instructional skills?
3. What are the levels of satisfaction with the peer coaching program implemented among student teachers in each group as compared to those of a traditional supervision model?

4. Method

4.1. Participants

The study was conducted between October 15, 2002 and July 16, 2003. Two groups of student teachers (32 in total) from the final-year, English language teaching (ELT)

Department of European University of Lefke, North Cyprus participated in this study during their regular Teaching Practicum course, which evolves from classroom observation to micro-teaching and finally full-lesson teaching, putting into practice and evaluating elements from previous methodology courses. Trainees were expected to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses in preparation for their teaching practice, final written report, self-evaluation of teaching experience, and final evaluation by cooperating teachers and course lecturer.

There were 8 male and 8 female student teachers both in the experimental group ($n = 16$) and control group ($n = 16$). They ranged in age from 20 to 25 years. Each participant had taken part in one previous School Experience course during their freshman and junior year and had taken other prior education courses (Introduction to Teaching, Methodology in ELT, Approaches to ELT, Planning and Evaluation in Teaching. At the time of this study, they were enrolled in courses including TEFL for Young Children, Testing and Evaluation, Guidance and Counselling in Teaching).

4.2. *Data*

The data were collected during the Teaching Practicum course. Student teachers were randomly assigned to an experimental or control group. Then, the two groups were randomly placed in two high schools (where the medium of instruction was English) in a small town (Guzelyurt) in North Cyprus, and were then assigned cooperating teachers from M.A. TEFL program within the schools as a third randomization process.

A 15-h orientation on peer coaching was held prior to the 7-week investigation. Student teachers were told whether they were part of the experimental or control group. The orientation employed an overview of the seven clarity skills representing desired teacher behaviors. The introduction involved definitions of the skills as well as role playing each skill by the researcher who served as the experimenter; the student teachers attempted to identify the skill being demonstrated.

Further, the participants were introduced to the type of English language lesson with all lesson plans including the procedures to be implemented in the pre-, during-, and post-sessions they would be required to teach weekly during their Teaching Practicum course and they had done a few teaching hours in their third year. The researcher modeled a typical lesson based on an integrated approach including reading, listening, oral communication, and writing skills right after procedural discussion. Apart from these, the student teachers engaged in participatory activities for the sake of clarifying concepts and developing self-efficacy.

Finally, a simulated post-conference following the English language lesson was conducted by the researcher and a student teacher volunteer. To be able to provide a structure for organizing subsequent post-conferences, these questions were asked: (a) What were the strengths and weaknesses? (b) If you were to teach this lesson again, how would you do it?

4.3. *Pre-assessment data*

The researcher video-taped lessons in the classrooms for all participants during Week 1 and audio-taped post-conferences to collect data. Student teachers met with their cooperating teacher to plan a 10-min English language lesson on the first day of the teaching

experience course and each student teacher presented his or her lesson on the second day of the class, which was also video-taped as a source of data.

Further, the post-conference session started following this teaching episode and participants engaged in it, employing the same two questions used in the orientation session. For the experimental group, the post-conference occurred between peers in the coaching dyads; for the control group, it took place between the student teacher and a faculty supervisor. All the post-conferences were audio-taped.

4.4. Intervention

4.4.1. Procedure

Participants attended weekly 90-min seminars; experimental and control student teachers attended separately in weeks 2–6. During that time period, the student teachers also participated biweekly in the field experience. Each week's seminar aimed to focus in depth on one or two of the seven clarity skills for both groups. During the seminar, the researcher did a micro-teaching session incorporating a targeted skill followed by a discussion of what had occurred. The student teachers then role played instances of the skill in a hypothetical teaching situation. Next, while viewing a videotape featuring student teachers demonstrating the highlighted skill, they recorded examples of that skill's use and they discussed about teaching sessions.

The student teachers participated in simulated post-conferences on the basis of the video-taped lesson at the end of each seminar, using the same questions asked for post-conferences throughout the study. Students in the experimental group practiced conducting post-conferences as part of peer coaching dyads; peers discussed strengths, weaknesses, and suggested improvements. Control-group students experienced post-conferencing simulations according to the more typical supervision model, in which a person in a position of authority (faculty; course conveyor; cooperating teacher) asks questions and the student teachers reply.

The experimental group's intervention differed primarily from the control group's intervention as follows: (a) students received feedback related to their teaching not only from persons in authority but also from a peer; (b) feedback was invariably immediate – that is, in every case, post-conferences between peer groups occurred as soon as the lesson ended, which was also the case when the faculty observed; and (c) post-conferences were always based on direct observation of instruction.

Both groups did a 20-min micro-teaching session twice per week during the Teaching Practicum course and focus was on incorporating a clarity skill into the lessons the week it was the subject of the seminar and extending its use throughout the Teaching Practicum course.

4.4.2. Experimental group

Student teachers were assigned in pairs to the same high school and elementary classroom where they, along with a cooperating teacher, observed each other teaching for the experimental condition. The peer coach maintained notes that included entries for demonstrations of clarity skills. Peers used the notes in the post-conferences that were held immediately after each lesson.

Peer coaching dyads conducted post-conferences four times weekly (i.e., for both peer groups on each of the 2 days when lessons were presented). In addition, two formal

post-conferences immediately following direct observation by a faculty member occurred during the Teaching Practicum course. Thus, the experimental group experienced 12 observations and post-conferences (10 between peer groups and 2 formal observations/post-conferences).

4.4.3. Control group

Participants were assigned to classrooms individually (rather than in pairs) for the control condition. A faculty member visited the classrooms but scheduling complexities caused by the number of field participants dictated the nature of the visits. The faculty directly observed the student teachers' instruction four times; post-conferences were held between the student teacher, faculty, and cooperating teacher. However, all visits did not coincide with the teaching episode so post-conferences were held without direct observation for three additional visits and relied on student teachers' descriptions of instruction. Furthermore, control students were observed five times by the cooperating teacher; post-conferences sometimes occurred immediately after observation between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. For example, the post-conferences were occasionally delayed until after a teacher-planning period or after school. There were 12 observations for each student teacher in the control group.

The treatment for the control group differed from the experimental group in that student teachers who experienced traditional faculty received feedback related to teaching only from persons of authority, feedback was not always immediate, or sometimes post-conferences occurred without direct observation of instruction.

4.5. Post-assessment data

The post-assessment data were based on a lesson taught during Week 7. Students from both groups prepared a video-taped English language lesson identical in length to that used for pre-assessment data and an audiotape of the final post-conference. As an additional component, participants completed anonymously an attitude scale developed and field tested by [Joyce and Showers \(1983\)](#). The Likert-type instrument, which also has been used by others investigating peer coaching ([Ncuberg and Bratton, 1987](#)), allowed students to rate several dimensions of their Teaching Practicum course on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high). The dimensions included (a) collegiality – support experienced in the field setting; (b) technical feedback – information pertinent to teaching performance; (c) analysis of application – usefulness of post-conferences; (d) adaptation to students – capability of demonstrating flexibility; (e) personal facilitation – rating of overall growth; and (f) overall assessment of the experience. The following open-ended questions were added to the original instrument: “The parts of the field experience most useful were ...” and “Overall, how would you rate your Teaching Practicum course regarding professional growth? Please explain”.

5. Data analysis

5.1. Video-taped data

The Clarity Observation Instrument ([Metcalf, 1989](#)) was used to evaluate treatment effects on development of each of the seven instructional skills, resulting in measures of frequency of occurrence, quality, and overall demonstration (i.e., the degree to which there

was evidence of all instructional skills in a lesson). The other instrument used in the study was Bandura's (1995) General Self-Efficacy Scale as it is assumed that a student teacher who believes in being able to cause an event can conduct more active and self-determined teaching and this will reflect the belief of being able to control challenging professional development demands by means of taking adaptive action.

Three raters, who worked with student teachers and had an average of 12 years' teaching experience, were trained to analyze the video-taped data. During four 3-h training sessions, definitions of targeted skills were discussed and sample videotapes were rated and compared. After each group-training session, raters independently measured three additional videotapes of student teachers teaching an English language lesson. With the use of Cronbach's alpha, internal consistency yielded .89 for frequency of occurrence and .84 for quality of use.

All 60 videotapes (30 from pre-assessment and 30 from post-assessment) were scored originating from the data collection procedures independently following training; every rater assessed every tape and during the ratings, one videotape was randomly selected to determine if interrater reliability was being maintained. That selection resulted in interrater agreement of 87% for frequency of occurrence, 85% for quality of use, and 92% for overall demonstration.

5.2. Audio-taped data

Clarity skills and self-efficacy were evaluated to assess the content of post-conference, and audiotapes were analyzed for the variables by the three raters.

Metcalf's (1989) definitions of the skills and the content of Bandura's (1995) self-efficacy instrument were discussed during each of four 3-h training sessions, and audio-taped simulated post-conferences were assessed by assigning each statement to one of seven categories – one category indicative of each of the six reasoning and action processes, plus a miscellaneous category. Three additional audiotapes were assessed independently after each group-training session, resulting in interrater agreement of 90% for comprehension, 85% for transformation, 90% for instruction, 88% for evaluation, 85% for reflection, and 88% for new comprehension.

Following training, 90 audiotapes – one per student per week collected at pre-assessment, mid-assessment, and post-assessment time periods (Weeks 1, 4, and 7) – were each scored independently by every rater. One randomly selected audiotape compared across raters produced interrater agreement of 89% for comprehension, 85% for transformation, 90% for instruction, 85% for evaluation, 85% for reflection, and 85% for new comprehension, demonstrating maintenance of interrater reliability.

6. Findings

6.1. Research question one

Means and standard deviations for self-efficacy are displayed in Table 1. Although pretest mean score differences for the two groups were not statistically significant for any of the variables, post-treatment results showed statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group for all variables: frequency of occurrence, $F(1,30) = 23.71, p < .001$.

Table 1
Means and standard deviations for frequency of occurrence

Self-efficacy items	Control group		Experimental group	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
(1) I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough				
<i>M</i>	.88	2.79	.61	4.89
<i>SD</i>	.65	1.18	.60	2.12
(2) If someone opposes me, I can find means and ways to get what I want				
<i>M</i>	2.01	5.85	1.88	11.10
<i>SD</i>	1.32	3.75	1.38	5.37
(3) It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals				
<i>M</i>	1.38	7.73	2.09	11.01
<i>SD</i>	1.05	4.81	1.24	6.26
(4) I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events				
<i>M</i>	.42	2.34	.64	7.11
<i>SD</i>	.47	2.05	.94	4.71
(5) Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations				
<i>M</i>	5.44	16.02	5.93	23.49
<i>SD</i>	4.28	8.91	4.70	12.45
(6) I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort				
<i>M</i>	1.23	8.06	1.22	10.87
<i>SD</i>	1.29	3.80	.68	5.71
(7) I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities				
<i>M</i>	1.33	2.77	1.12	6.15
<i>SD</i>	1.54	2.68	.95	3.77
(8) When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions				
<i>M</i>	1.58	7.71	2.00	10.87
<i>SD</i>	.95	4.83	1.33	6.40
(9) If I am in trouble, I can usually think of something to do				
<i>M</i>	.85	2.18	.70	5.13
<i>SD</i>	.68	1.79	.51	2.00
(10) No matter what comes my way, I'm usually able to handle it				
<i>M</i>	1.44	2.77	1.02	6.25
<i>SD</i>	1.43	2.68	1.05	3.67
Overall mean score	1.67	5.66	1.71	9.84

6.2. Research question two

For instructional (clarity) skills variables, group means were unequal at pre-assessment (see Tables 2 and 3). An analysis of co-variance was used to test for statistical significance. Between-group mean score comparisons at post-assessment indicated statistical significance in favor of the experimental group, $F(1,30) = 255.40$, $p < .001$.

Although responses during post-conferences centered on clarity skills, there were many other points of discussion on materials, the task, and students. The following example describes peer interactions during a post-conference (taken from Audiotape No. 4B).

Peer Coach. What do you think of the strengths of the lesson?

Teaching Peer. I thought the class really got into talking about peace with me and they really seemed to enjoy the reading text about peace since it is the current issue on the island.

Peer Coach. Yes, the text was really authentic and it seems that they are really concerned about the future of the island.

Teaching Peer. That is right, they got excited and motivated.

Table 2
Means and standard deviations for instructional skills

Clarity (instructional) skills	Control group		Experimental group	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
(1) Stating objectives				
<i>M</i>	3.53	5.18	4.75	10.67
SD	1.74	4.05	1.84	2.11
(2) Repeating points				
<i>M</i>	4.53	6.75	5.30	11.13
SD	1.62	4.25	2.45	2.61
(3) Using examples				
<i>M</i>	4.64	8.12	5.48	12.07
SD	1.68	3.41	2.11	2.89
(4) Repeating items				
<i>M</i>	3.46	4.33	4.37	10.63
SD	1.45	1.74	1.70	2.51
(5) Asking questions				
<i>M</i>	5.99	8.90	6.03	12.97
SD	2.69	2.76	1.81	1.64
(6) Student questions				
<i>M</i>	4.61	5.25	6.10	10.87
SD	1.90	2.51	2.34	3.31
(7) Practice time				
<i>M</i>	5.47	10.12	5.34	12.80
SD	2.39	2.89	1.18	2.56
Overall mean score	5.36	8.30	5.79	12.61

Table 3

Means and standard deviations for quality of use

Clarity (instructional) skills	Control group		Experimental group	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
(1) Stating objectives				
<i>M</i>	4.71	5.88	4.57	10.66
SD	1.56	3.35	2.02	2.12
(2) Repeating points				
<i>M</i>	5.59	6.77	6.30	12.01
SD	1.56	4.23	1.45	1.73
(3) Using examples				
<i>M</i>	4.62	9.11	6.53	12.80
SD	1.70	2.42	1.06	2.17
(4) Repeating items				
<i>M</i>	3.77	4.33	4.36	10.61
SD	1.14	1.74	1.71	2.53
(5) Asking questions				
<i>M</i>	5.55	9.02	6.06	12.69
SD	2.73	2.64	1.78	1.63
(6) Student questions				
<i>M</i>	4.57	5.20	5.10	10.66
SD	1.94	2.56	1.50	3.52
(7) Practice time				
<i>M</i>	5.18	10.89	5.09	13.80
SD	2.68	2.12	1.43	1.56
Overall mean score	5.39	8.33	5.90	12.49

Peer Coach. They definitely enjoyed seeing the different points of view about the peace. I think the text was really good for you to use considering their level and interests.

Teaching Peer. These types of topics have always had a great impact on them, because they keep hearing about the war from their grandparents and they will be the ones to change the faith of the island.

Peer Coach. Oh, you are right! What do you feel was the weakness of the lesson?

Teaching Peer. I would probably do something different with the writing aspect of it in the post-reading section. I asked them to define their ‘dream country’. However this task didn’t make them use some information from the reading text. I wish I had asked them to compare ‘a country in war’ and ‘a country in peace’. They could be more creative in that way.

Peer Coach. They seemed to have good time writing about a ‘dream country’ though.

Teaching Peer. I also didn’t state my objectives.

Peer Coach. But you did tell them what they would learn. How would you improve this lesson then?

Teaching Peer. I would state my objectives, talk about the significance of the differences between war and peace, put them in groups and let them talk about it and bring them back to the big group in the pre-reading section.

Peer Coach. Yeah, they actually saw the differences and I did like it when you asked questions about a country where people lived in peace. It really made them think and concentrate.

Teaching Peer. I needed to have gone further with my questions and class discussion.

Peer Coach. That would have been good, especially for the group work. Why not try it next time?

6.3. Research question three

Means and standard deviations for quality of use are displayed in Table 3. Between-group mean score comparisons at post-assessment indicated statistical significance in favor of the experimental group for quality of use, $F(1,30) = 49.77, p < .001$.

Regarding the open-ended questions, both groups made statements to the fact that overall professional growth had been accomplished and those who participated in peer coaching made a greater number of favorable comments about specific aspects of the field experience than those who did not participate. The area in which the fewest number of peer-coaching-group students made positive responses related to ability to adapt to students' needs. The fewest number of positive statements made by students who experienced faculty supervision pertained to obtaining details relevant to their execution of instruction.

7. Discussion

Findings in this study were consistent with the extensive literature on peer coaching with teachers that found it was effective in a way that student teachers reported a sense of freedom to ask questions and expressed their own opinions and increased demonstrations and effectiveness of instructional skills and self-confidence due to consistent feedback. All participants were satisfied with the nature of the feedback received from peers. This was felt to increase the individual's sense of contributing to a professional scholarship of teaching. Videotape feedback was also found to be one instrumental component in increasing effective teaching behaviors of student teachers.

Experiential activities, such as teaching practica or other mastery experiences, seem to have greater impact on teacher efficacy of pre-service teachers (Hoy and Woolfolk, 1990; Sia, 1992). In university teacher education programs, the student teachers usually require more intensive supervisory efforts and are the critical test of the efficacy of supervision. Such experiences allow for a direct evaluation of one's abilities as a teacher. The findings of this study suggest that coaching may play a crucial role in improving the teaching performance of these trainees. Although circumstances vary for the different universities, constraints limiting the amount of time available for individual faculty supervision during field experiences are typical. Thus, even if one could merely demonstrate that the two supervision models were equally robust, that would provide an argument in favor of peer coaching to augment university supervision so that opportunities of observation, feedback, and guidance might be expanded.

Both trainees and coaches reported that they viewed the coaching procedures favorably and assistance from peers who have been trained to provide support can be extremely productive in achieving field experience goals. Because peer coaching dyads achieved greater adeptness in the targeted objectives than those receiving traditional supervision, one may conclude that the more consistent feedback received by the experimental group helped the

student teachers integrate the strategies into their teaching repertoires. The category on the attitude measure in which the fewest positive comments were made by the control group was that related to obtaining information about their instructional activities.

As peer coaching provides student teachers with more time to negotiate strategies than traditional supervision, it promotes autonomy and self-directed learning, and gives them opportunities to work with individual teachers (Crookes and Chaudron, 2001; Harmer, 2001; Mackey, 2000). In addition, they may feel less anxious and more confident when interacting with peers during discussions.

Interestingly, our ad hoc concerns were found to resonate with research findings. Studies of reflection amongst trainee teachers had found, for example, difficulty in being self-critical and lack of a language of reflection, an inability to articulate personal needs or wants, to describe personal learning processes or identify the strategies used for improving practice (Hatton and Smith, 1995; Pickering, 2003).

Other advantages may also result from peer coaching. That preparation may help student teachers move into their inservice careers as collaborators. Collaboration among teachers is a valued and often necessary factor for effective schooling as it fosters expert instruction.

8. Conclusion

A diversified EFL school curriculum can be viewed as a network of interacting systems involving teachers, learners, materials, schools, and principals, and choices at one level affect other elements in the system (Goker, 2004; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Thus the choice of such a curriculum implies a reflective learning community where teachers will engage in collective learning processes to diagnose problems and adapt materials and design original learning activities.

The choice of a quality EFL curriculum requires EFL teachers and practitioners to engage in peer coaching processes and participatory activities to diagnose problems, clarify concepts, and develop self-efficacy.

Peer coaching is a part of reflective practice and an important means for instituting collaborative efforts and it warrants consideration as a potentially serviceable solution for improving teacher effectiveness when implemented both in pre-service and in-service EFL contexts. It is also relatively inexpensive and potentially reusable. Trained coaches may be able to assist several student teachers or train new coaches over time.

9. Limitations and suggestions for future research

Student teachers may require repeated demonstration and practice opportunities before developing versatile repertoires of teaching behaviors. Future research could be conducted to address the effectiveness of peer coaching components in relation to characteristics of student teachers and future research on peer coaching should also evaluate effects in light of these methodological limitations as the effects of peer coaching based primarily on measures of teacher behaviors and only to a minimal extent on student behaviors were examined. Each of these considerations raises new research questions.

There is no evidence from this study that these personal and environmental factors influenced student teacher efficacy. Therefore, the next study should investigate the relationships between personal and environmental factors and student teacher efficacy. Once

relationships are identified, further studies using multiple regression models should look at personal and environmental factors collectively in explaining student teacher efficacy. The construct of student teacher efficacy should be further developed to reflect the standards and competencies student teachers in TEFL education are expected to perform. Longitudinal trend studies should follow student teachers to determine if personal and environmental factors influence teacher efficacy at different points throughout the teacher development process. Furthermore, triangulated studies should be conducted to determine what personal and environmental factors influence student teachers' performances related to teacher efficacy.

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